

CLASSIC BUS

No37 OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 1998 £2.75



IN THIS 56-PAGE ISSUE

RIBBLE IN COLOUR • ATLANTIAN AT 40
THE 1958 COMMERCIAL SHOW • CAMBRIDGE IN THE 1960s
BRIGHTON MEMORIES • LONDON STLs



FROM THE ARCHIVES

BRIGHTON

JULIAN OSBORNE dusts off his 1964 notebook

REGULAR readers may now have deduced that stored away in Osborne's attic is every notebook from every bus trip he ever went on and that every bus trip he ever went on was favoured with copious note-taking. This is true and when your *Classic Bus* editor and I discussed this distressing phenomenon, it occurred to us that rather than go to all the work of developing an article theme and structure and then using the notebooks to hang flesh on the bones, we could just select a day at random from the notebooks, see what's recorded and develop an instant article – the literary equivalent of one-hour processing!

So we did, and the lucky day selected was Saturday 8 February 1964 – the date of the last parentally-supervised visit to Brighton. Brighton was the last local destination to which my parents insisted upon accompaniment of Osborne Junior and notebook, as they believed, not unreasonably, that the place was peopled by more than its fair share of bizarre and eccentric people.

What did I consider worth noting on that overcast and dismal late winter's day?

First priority were the 'cops' – buses, all Southdowns, seen for the first time and the notebook records the following as netted: all-Leyland PD2/1 JCD 71; all-Leyland PD2/12 LUF 226; Park Royal Guy Arab IV OUF 513, PUF 626, PUF 641; Queen Mary 2884 CD; Harrington Cavalier Leyland Leopard coach 2703/4/25/6/8 CD, 8730 CD + similar Grenadier 746 DCD; Marshall/Leyland Leopard bus 102 CUF, 104 CUF, 107 CUF Beadle/Tiger Cub coach SUF 884, SUF 913; Harrington/Commer coach XUF 46; Duple/Tiger Cub bus MUF 636; Beadle TS8 rebuild single-deck bus MCD 884.

This also gives us a fair idea of what Southdown was offering for service on local routes and on country and interurbans at that time. The Guys would most likely have been on northbound country services to places in an arc between Horsham and Hawkhurst, as would the PD2/12. The Queen Mary would probably have been on the trunk Eastbourne Road services. The coaches were no doubt delicensed for the winter in Freshfield Road garage. The Beadle rebuild wasn't really a bus at all. We know for certain that the Tiger Cub bus was at work on the 30 to Chelwood Common because it features in a rather murky picture of Pool Valley bus station which also reveals Queen Mary XUF 862, all-Leyland PD2/12 MCD 750 and Beadle PD2/12 RUF 179. The 30, and inter-timed 32 and 36, were Southdown's last crew-operated single-

deck routes and worked thus as far as Haywards Heath, their last legs, in the 30's case to Chelwood Common, being taken over by an OPO driver. At Chelwood Common it was timed to connect with the upbound 92 from Eastbourne and Uckfield, heading for East Grinstead – the whole of Southdown's network was a grid of such connections and the crews took them very seriously – as late as 1969, my driver of a 92 waited ten minutes at Chelwood Common and disembarked to scan the 30's approaches in vain before finally, and reluctantly, giving up on the connection and departing. The Tiger Cub single-deckers were funny little things, a 1950s fad that were of little use (to paraphrase Southdown's chief engineer of the 1960s!) making a lot of rather unpleasant noise but achieving not so much – fortunately most journeys on the 30 were in the hands of more business-like Royal Tigers.

Mishaps

The other three vehicles in this Pool Valley shot all had mishaps in their careers: indeed RUF 179 and MCD 750 were prematurely retired a few years later as a result of rear-end damage – the increasingly hazardous trunk rural road stop claiming the Beadle example but rumour had it that one 1960s withdrawal with crumpled staircase had achieved this by reversing too far in Pool Valley! Two years previously when almost new, the Queen Mary had been nearly destroyed by fire in Clanfield dormitory shed in Portsmouth's hinterland. It was dispatched to Northern Counties for

repairs and returned with a non-standard illuminated advert panel and the ability to start intense debates amongst enthusiasts as to whether it had been rebuilt or rebodied. It eventually sailed away to become the most appropriately numbered of China Motor Bus's PD-class of ex-Southdown Marys – for its last decade no.862 was PD3. On 8 February 1964 it was working on service 31 to Portsmouth. No.750 was at work on the delightful behind Downs run of the 22 to Midhurst, which remained crewed and double-decked for most of the 1960s. There is another picture taken that day – equally unprepossessing and poorly exposed but a gem now of times past: it depicts another all-Leyland PD2/1, JCD 49, standing in Old Steine, its conductor leaning on the front to chat to the driver before departure for Coldean (*below*). It's also taken from the strangely low vantage point of a 12-year old.

The next thing the notebook tells us is that we rode on Brighton Hove & District UAP 30 and VAP 31 – both these things were Bristol FSFs, which BH&D bought in small numbers for a while before reverting temporarily to backloaders. Given that we apparently visited Southdown's Freshfield Road garage on this trip and BH&D's rigid vehicle-to-route/duty policy, I think we can safely assume that we used these between the garage and central Brighton, leaving 30 as it began its taxing ascent of Race Hill. Ten years later when I came occasionally to conduct these vehicles, I found their forward-entrance-within-27ft-



length arrangements very cramped and difficult to work in and was never pleased to see them; I also seem to recall that one (29 says another notebook) sat half-way up Bear Road with a full load one evening, wheels spinning, debating whether it was prepared to pull away from a request stop that someone had rather tiresomely requested – Race Hill was basically the same bit of Brighton-covered downland. The other bus ridden on was Southdown semi-automatic Queen Mary 6950 CD – this was a Worthing bus so could have been ridden on back home – did we go by train and catch it to or from the station? I think that we actually went by, if you'll pardon the expression, car and seem to recall walking along Brighton sea front during the course of the afternoon; perhaps we drove to Hove,

parked for nothing, walked in and caught 950 back to the car. That would have meant that it was working on service 31 to Portsmouth that day, just prior to the general demotion of these things to Worthing local services.

My notes next record '310 still operating' and seeing it 'washed with a hose'. No.310 was HCD 910, an all-Leyland PD1, and its continued employment was noted because a week earlier all similar devices at Worthing had been summarily ousted from their normal haunt of the route past our house by crewed 36ft Leyland Leopard single-deckers; this had been a huge and exciting innovation as our routes went from having the oldest buses in the allocation to the newest. Most of the PD1s has disappeared overnight and the next few

months' notes are peppered with the discovery of them still working in some spot or other. No.310 had not been one of ours but I believe that its sighting on this day was the first indication that the batch had not been eliminated at a stroke as we had originally surmised. It was probably performing on some local satellite route between Brighton's Old Steine and the Lewes Road estates and the hose drew comment, I think, because it was used in preference to the bus wash. Notes record that no other PD1s were seen, nor were any of the 1950 Northern Counties Guy Arab IIIs that had been common on Brighton services beforehand.

Another note records that brand new coach: 176 DCD has 'a Plaxton body with four nearside windows – fabulous!'. Plaxton's Panorama body was a novelty in 1964.

Meanwhile all-Leyland PD2/1s JCD 36/41 were working on BH&D/Brighton Corporation service 7; in those wicked days of collaborative transport provision, all three Brighton operators planned their services together and, shock horror, pooled the revenue based on planned mileage. This 1961 deal had ended years of bickering and, most significantly, allowed Lewes Road buses at last



Left: Park Royal had long been a Southdown favourite, many bodies being supplied during the prewar, wartime and postwar periods, but after some 36 units were supplied on rebodied prewar chassis, Leyland and Northern Counties became the norm. But in 1955 a dozen Leyland Titan PD2/12 with most attractive Park Royal 57-seat bodies arrived, like no.767 (OCD 767), seen at Pool Valley bus station, Brighton in May 1958. Some years later no.767 prematurely ended its career by reversing into the barriers behind it at the same location. In the background is Park Royal-rebodied Leyland TD4 no.152.

Michael Dryhurst

Below: One of Southdown's Brighton-London coach services being worked by no.3 (RUF 102), a Beadle-Cammer T48B 41-seat integral coach of 1956, which shares the A23 Crawley bypass with a large American convertible and a Triumph Mayflower. No.3 ended her days as a shed in Ireland.

Michael Dryhurst



to serve the town centre direct. Every so often the plan was not met and vehicles worked on other operators' routes to 'balance the mileage' hence the appearance of these two green Leylands on routes that normally saw red buses.

Familiar collection

Of which, the notes make no other mention but we can safely assume that BH&D's services were being operated by the familiar collection of KSWs and Lodekkas. Indeed, given that it's BH&D we can predict with a great deal of certainty which vehicles were working which timings of each route. A dedicated researcher with a BH&D maintenance schedule could eliminate any absences covered by spares and give you the complete picture relatively quickly. Barring abnormalities you can be pretty certain that duty 6 on service 5 out of Whitehawk garage was being worked by 1953 KSW HAP 994, which, as John Roberts revealed in his BH&D book a few years ago worked that duty day in day out from December 1953 until withdrawal in August 1971!

The notes equally make no specific mention of the Brighton Corporation fleet but then it was a small, relatively-standardised one, which was of little interest operationally – seemingly blessed with the quietest routes in the Brighton Area Transport agreement (with the exception of trunk route 49 from the Lewes Road estates, through Brighton & Hove and out to Southwick). Most of its prewar Weymann AEC Regents continued in service through 1964, a feat possible because they were rarely taxed with more than a handful of passengers!

Southdown had just embarked upon a policy of removing rear destination information from front-loading double-deckers and these notes record that 837 had had its rear box painted over and that 891, having already succumbed to that, had had the



Top: Southdown no.754 (MCD 754) was numerically the last Leyland-bodied bus to be supplied to the company. This 1963 view shows the bus laying-over at The George, Crawley, terminus. This service has come from Haywards Heath but in those days service 23 worked right through from Brighton to Crawley.

Michael Dryhurst

Centre: Brighton Corporation's collection of prewar and early postwar Weymann-bodied AEC Regents paddled about on quiet services for most of the 1960s. Some of the 1950 KCD batch of Regent IIIs survived long enough to have the shock of working their last months on very busy trunk route 49 when it became the only crewed route at the end of the decade.

Michael Dryhurst

Rounding the Palace Pier roundabout on pointless service 43 in October 1967 is Brighton Hove & District no.470 (JAP 508), a 1953 Bristol KSW6G with ECW 60-seat body.

Julian Osborne



number and destination apertures reversed so that the still operative number one could be reached by the conductor from the lower saloon. Prior to this, rear blind adjustment had involved rummaging around behind the back seat upstairs – a curious arrangement. No.837 was Portsmouth's so was presumably on famous trunk route 31; no.891 was a Worthing local and so was probably not seen in Brighton. Seven years later, 837 became one of the first Queen Marys transferred to BH&D duties in Brighton and both of them ended their days hurtling from Shaukiwan to the Macao Ferry Pier as parts of the China Motor Bus Company fleet in Hong Kong.

The other company providing stage carriage

vehicles was Maidstone & District but no mention of its PD2/12s (Leyland or MCW-bodied) on various joint services with Southdown is found. The longest of these services ran from Gravesend to Brighton. Coach services also receive no direct mention – at that time of year there were Southdown's London services, which at about this time acquired the exciting novelty of non-stop timings, the South Coast Express operated jointly by Southdown, Royal Blue and East Kent between Bournemouth and Margate and the daily return coach to the Cheltenham stampede. The notes just finish after 891's rear blind and move on to 9 February's mundane Worthing observations. **CR**

Julian Osborne has lived in Worthing, Oxford, London, Bandar Seri Begawan and currently Guildford. He works in civil aviation, nominally in Human Resource Management.

Michael Yelton writes on an earlier period in the Southdown story in 'Classic Bus Yearbook 4' in which he takes a 1951/2 timetable as his holiday reading and marvels on the network of connections that were available.



Sister bus to no.456, which as the text reminds us operated route 5 for 18 years, is no.458 (HAP 996), a 1953 Bristol KSW6G with 60-seat ECW body, seen in 1967 hurrying through the Old Steine with the usual full load on what was BH&D's busiest service, route 5.

Julian Osborne

Brighton Corporation started experimenting with driver-only operation in the 1960s, converting double-deck Titans and then purchasing purpose-built single- and double-deckers. Before making its choice a procession of demonstrators visited and here in 1967 Daimler Roadliner/Marshall CVC 124C is being tested against Leyland Panther Cub/Strachans YTB 771D behind. A BH&D Bristol FSF zooms by.

Julian Osborne





CAMBRIDGE IN THE Swinging SIXTIES

PAUL CARTER remembers an exciting decade

THE 1960s are regarded as a time when

everything went with a swing. What is admitted less often is that several years passed before anything showed any sign of swinging at all. Those of us who are old enough might remember the decade as the age of The Beatles, rear-engines, minis (cars and skirts), forward entrances, buildings regarded by architects as bold, visual statements, illuminated advertisement panels, parking meters, reversed liveries, Doctor Beeching, bigger buses, pirate radio stations, fluorescent lighting, Harold Wilson's white heat of technology, one-man double-deckers, flower power and the formation of National Bus Company. Some of these innovations were probably noticed more than others by the Great British public, but there is no denying that it was a time of change.

To an impressionable ten-year-old bus enthusiast living in Cambridge in 1960 the pace of change seemed to be slow, although the first of the bold, visual statements was completed in that year. This was Bradwell's Court, the city's first shopping precinct, mentioned here because it replaced the quaint, narrow Christ's Lane as the quickest way from the city centre to Drummer Street. The much-criticised bus station was left untouched, although the old Eastern Counties booking office was replaced by spacious, modern premises in the new development. The first FS-type Lodekkas also joined the fleet, fitted with the company's preferred power unit, the trusty Gardner 5LW engine. The new buses were classified LFS but to me they looked very like the familiar LD-types, classified LKD. As they were confined to country routes I was unable to see the benefits of their uncluttered, flat-floor interiors. Other changes saw the conversion of the large (45-seat!) LS and MW buses for driver-only working, those with rear indicator displays having them painted or panelled over. Their fleetnumber prefixes were changed from LL to LM, although the prototype LS stayed as LL744. The letters LL were retained for the older halfcab saloons which were present in healthy numbers, with up to ten fewer seats but still requiring two-person crews. Most driver-only work was covered by SC4LKs (LC class) assisted by some of the unusual Bedford SBO coaches which had been adapted for bus use, repainted red and reclassified BVS. For me, riding on a one-person bus was an infrequent and incomplete experience. Despite the sound and fury of an SC4LK and the unappreciated rarity of a Gardner 4LK-engined Bedford/Duple, I was always concerned about the fate of the conductors. After all, I planned to join them one day.

Further FS5Gs followed in 1961, together



with MW buses and coaches and a final batch of SC4LKs, all with reversed NG and VF registrations. None appeared on my local route. This was service 105 from Beaumont Road to Newnham, normally worked by highbridge KSWs and rebodied wartime Ks, which ran every 20 minutes (half-hourly on Sundays) right through to the last full journey at 22.30. Relief buses, often L5Gs, were provided at busy times, and by 1964 additional journeys were being operated from the city centre as far as Mowbray Road. It was not until November 1961 that modernity appeared

Top: A 1960s scene in Cambridge. At the newly-built Bradwell's Court, a Mini passes one of the Eastern Counties KSW5Gs with highbridge bodywork which were faithful performers on the city routes for many years. LKH272 (LNG 272) is on service 106 to the New Hospital, which became the terminus for several routes. A Richardson/Photobus

Above: Eastern Counties discovered forward-entrance double-deckers with six-cylinder engines in the summer of 1966, the first to be allocated to Cambridge was FLF445 (GVF 445D), seen here in Drummer Street on a short-working of the Ely service. Another FLF shares the background with an Austin A40 and an FX3 taxi. A Richardson/Photobus

on the city routes. The new FSSGs (LFS17-20, 1117-20 PW) delivered in that month were bristling with up-to-the minute features such as cream window rubbers, fluorescent lights and (luxury!) heaters. The latter were still quite a novelty, and every winter crews still dressed as though their routes were extended to Siberia. The new buses also had a short-lived 1960s feature, namely illuminated advertisement panels. Buses from the previous batch (LFS11-6) working in on service 151 had already informed us (after dark) that 'Peterborough people read the Advertiser.' Now we had 'Marshall for Austin' - hopefully they were happy together. It all seemed very exciting then.

Over the next four years Eastern Counties purchased 120 FSSGs, and several enjoyed long careers on Cambridge local services. Illuminated adverts were discontinued after LFS35, while four of the 1963 deliveries had open rear platforms. One of these (LFS47, 47 CNG) was allocated to Cambridge. Many more MWs also appeared. The buses were all equipped for OMO, but the management seemed to share my concerns for the older crews, and two-person MWs were regularly employed on some country routes. The first

1962 batch of coaches (LS804-15, 3804-15 PW) introduced the boldly restyled body, which appeared just as the 1960s were beginning to swing and which seemed very much in keeping with the latest trends. Further batches followed, leading to the demotion of older LS-type coaches to bus duties.

Venerable

Exciting though the new vehicles were, they replaced many buses which I had grown up with and regarded as old friends. The last of the venerable Leyland TD2s (AH16) bowed out in 1960, followed by the entire batch of ECW-Dennis rebuilds (CD832-47) in 1961. Withdrawal of standard L-type saloons then began in earnest, although some of the 1950 dual-purpose examples (LE697-703, KNG 697-703) were remarkably repainted into cream and maroon coach livery in 1962 and continued in service as such for another two years. The disposal of postwar K-type double-deckers also began, starting with the lowbridge ones. In 1963, KSW LKH271 (LNG 271), made a spectacular exit after it demolished a house in Chesterton while working on service 101.

United Counties, the other local Tilling

operator, provided more modernity in 1961 when it introduced FLF6Bs (with YNV registrations) on the main road service 128 from Bedford and Northampton. I discovered that one bus for this route was outstationed in Cambridge at the Eastern Counties garage. In 1963 the 'back road' from Bedford (175) was shortened to run between Biggleswade and Cambridge, while service 41 from Hitchin was renumbered 91. This was cut back to Royston in 1966 when the schoolday extensions to Cambridge were discontinued.

Family holidays during this period took us to the territories of operators such as Devon General, Maidstone & District and Ribble. Here I encountered rear-engined double-deckers for the first time in the shape of futuristic-looking Atlanteans. In 1961 longer and wider buses became legal. The Tilling companies seemed slow to take advantage of these developments, however, and it was the local independents who led the way. Burwell & District received what was described as 'one of the first 36ft coaches in East Anglia' in June 1962. This was 932 BCE, an AEC Reliance with a Plaxton Highway 47-seat body, now fortunately preserved by Jim Neale. B&D had already broken with tradition by adding an AEC Reliance/Duple 41-seater to its all-Daimler coach fleet in 1960. WVE 10 wore a plain all-cream livery, but its longer companion wore the familiar cream and brown colours. Repainting of the older Daimler double-deckers in the modern 'reversed' style had already started, and this livery was used for the Willowbrook-bodied Daimler Fleetline (9 DER) which the company proudly placed in service in August 1963. This vehicle was a real head-turner and its purchase followed trials with the well-known demonstrator 7000 HP. A second Fleetline with a Coventry-style Willowbrook body (DEB 484C) followed in 1965, together with former AEC Renown/Park Royal demonstrator 7552 MX, which had also previously been on loan.

Growing fleet

At Hilton, Whippet Coaches also added a 36ft Reliance (894 DEW) to its growing fleet, its Yeates body unusually having a centre entrance. In contrast, two new Bedford SB5s (745/6 FEW) were modified by Yeates to allow entrances ahead of their front axles. In May 1963 came 390 GEW, the very first



Top: The perfect single-decker? The 1960s saw the replacement by driver-only vehicles of the halfcab saloons, all of which had gone by the end of 1968. LL404 (KAH 404) was one of a batch of ten Bristol L4G vehicles which were officially classified as 'rebuilt' when delivered in 1949. Later renumbered LL901-10, the entire batch was withdrawn in 1965.

A Richards/Photobus

Left: Eastern Counties received an early batch of Bristol RESL6G buses with this attractive ECW body style, featuring wrap-round windscreens. Two were initially allocated to Cambridge, working alongside LS and MW buses on country routes and RS657 (KVF 657E) is seen on the main road service to Haverhill. RS658 from the same batch has been immaculately preserved by the Eastern Transport Collection.

A Richards/Photobus

example of Yeates bodywork on a Bedford VAL14, which attracted much interest at the British Coach Rally at Brighton. With their Leyland engines, these small-wheeled, twin-steering coaches were radically different from previous models, and seemed to perfectly capture the mood of the time. They were new, they were different and (it seemed) they were everywhere, although their bodywork was more usually built by Duple or Plaxton. Whippet purchased the products of both after Yeates ceased production soon afterwards. The company's first new double-decker provided further excitement in January 1966. Registered FEW 1D, it was a Leyland Atlantean with Willowbrook bodywork similar to that on B&D's second Fleetline. It was one of a pair ordered jointly with The Delaine of Bourne, whose characteristic styling was evident. More mundane purchases were a former Ribble Leyland PD2/3 (CCK 655), together with two RTs (HLX 363, JXC 40) and three RLHs (MXX 237/8/48) from London Transport. 'New-look' buses later appeared in the shape of a PD2 from East Midland (RRR 96) and MCY-registered AEC Regent Vs from South Wales.

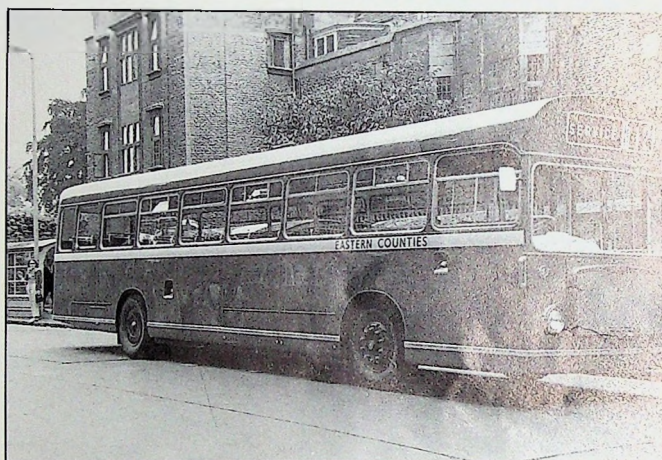
Some of Whippet's expansion came from two modest takeovers. The business of Brand of Elsworth was acquired in 1962, including an infrequent route into Cambridge and a bizarre Commer Commando with a Thurgood body (LEV 350). Three years later Whippet took over the operations of Papworth Village Settlement. I had often wondered about the activities of the grey Bedford SB/Duple (Midland) bus (OCE 83) which appeared regularly in Drummer Street. No timetable was displayed and no tickets seemed to be issued at the Cambridge end. Eventually I discovered that this stage service was restricted to patients, staff and visitors travelling to and from Papworth Hospital. This was already served by Whippet's St Ives-Cambridge route, to which the PVS timings were added. A normal-control Bedford (OVE 906) also appeared occasionally, but the two buses were not used by Whippet.

Premier Travel also acquired vehicles from Ribble and London Transport, the former in particular giving a characteristic look to the company's routes for many years. In January 1962 most of the utility Guys rattled away to be scrapped, replaced by ten of Ribble's famous 'White Lady' Leyland PD2/3s, with DCK registrations. Their lowbridge East Lancs bodies had full fronts which emphasised their streamlined styling, and these comfortable buses worked alongside the famous 'County' class Daimler CVD6 double-deckers until the Daimlers were scrapped in 1966. Further variety was provided by Bristol K6As and L6As from Maidstone & District, while from LT came RFs for use as one-man buses. Eight former 'private hire' examples (LUC registrations) purchased in 1963 were later joined by four standard Green Line specimens. Loadings on Premier's rural bus network were declining, but there was a steady build-up of traffic on the company's express routes. New services to Lancashire began in 1961, operated jointly with Yelloway of Rochdale, whose distinctive coaches added to the colour in Drummer Street. Service 79, to what was then known as London Airport,

One of the four FSSG Lodekkas delivered in November 1961 shows off some of its new features, including cream window rubbers and an illuminated advertisement. Normally to be found on city routes, LFS20 (1120 PW) is seen in Drummer Street on service 143 (formerly 113A) to Stapleford via Hinton Way. M G Doggett



The open door and the absence of a Setright machine indicate that this Bristol RELL6G was still being used as a two-person bus when photographed soon after delivery in July 1968. Seen in Drummer Street on the Saffron Walden service, it shows a destination display long-favoured by Eastern Counties crews. M G Doggett



Traditionally a Daimler user, Burwell & District caused a stir in 1963 with the purchase of this Fleetline, 9 DER. It had a 73-seat Willowbrook body, and its modern styling was emphasised by its reversed cream and brown livery. It lasted until the end of B&D's operations in 1979 and was subsequently preserved, but was sadly scrapped because of corrosion problems. Part of the front end survives in a museum in Burwell. R H G Simpson



made its modest appearance in 1964, despite vigorous objections by Eastern Counties, London Transport and British Railways. The important Birmingham-Cambridge-Clacton route became a year-round service. The success of these (and other) routes, and of Premier's growing chain of travel agencies, led to the purchase of a pair of 36ft Reliances in 1964. Registered AVE 444/555B, they too were very distinctive, for they had Alexander

Y-type bodies which were uncommon in the south. More followed, working alongside older Burlingham Seagull-bodied Reliances which had replaced halfcab coaches and Bedford OBs. Premier's directors decided not to buy any new rear-engined double-deckers after Fleetline/Alexander demonstrator 565 CRW was tried out for a few days in December 1965. Its red and cream livery caused frequent confusion with Eastern Counties buses.



Unlovely and inhumane

There were few major route changes. Improvements to the city network took buses further into the growing Arbury Estate on service 130, while the Fen Estate in Chesterton and Foster Road in Trumpington were served for the first time by variations of services 101 and 115. On the southern outskirts of the city, the first phase of the new Addenbrookes Hospital opened in 1962. When the second phase was completed it was derided even by the Architects Journal as 'an unlovely and inhumane heap'. Despite this, the new hospital eventually replaced the old one in Trumpington Street and became a focal point for several bus routes. Alternate buses on service 106 terminated there, while the single-deck 139 was extended from Mowbray Road. A similar extension was eventually made to the 105 short workings referred to earlier. Sunday adjustments in 1966 saw the 105 altered to provide an hourly service from Coldhams Lane to Newnham, with the 130 offering buses every 40 minutes from Beaumont Road to North Arbury. The Coldham's Lane section of services 102/133 was discontinued on Sundays and weekday evenings.

Some country routes were amalgamated, with others renumbered to do away with suffi letters. Service 111 was extended from Burwe to Newmarket, incorporating the 117; the lon 137 to March became a variation of the 104 from Cottenham; buses to Hinton, previousl numbered 112A, became extra journeys on Saffron Walden service 112, which also absorbed the Tuesday-only Debden Green journeys previously numbered 143. Other renumberings were 113A (Stapleford via Hinton Way) to a new 143, 123A (Somershar via St Ives) to 156 and Thursday-only 137A (Ely via Cottenham) to 149. The Great Grandsen-Waresley section of service 118 disappeared in 1961 and the route later ceased to reach Papworth, leaving Whippet i charge. Services 107/156 were diverted via Oakington on Sundays after city service 129 was withdrawn on that day. Reductions on th 112 left Premier Travel as the only company

Top: Seen in traditional Burwell & District livery, this 1951 Daimler CVD6, JVE 447, later became the first double-decker in the fleet to carry the reversed schem It had a lowbridge Massey body and is seen outside th Burwell depot on service 11 from Isleham. This replac part of the Mildenhall-Cambridge railway, which clos before Doctor Beeching appeared on the scene. Withdrawn in 1970, the bus survived for many years afterwards in a Cambridge scrapyard.
P Carter collection

Centre: In 1965 B&D purchased the AEC Renown/Parl Royal demonstrator, 7552 MX, having previously borrowed it for a while. It was followed soon afterwa by a second Fleetline, giving the company an impress modern 'front line', although the problems of maintaining a smart appearance with a predominant cream livery are evident in this view.
P Carter collection

Left: Whippet was a loyal purchaser of Yeates-bodied coaches. Among the last were a pair of Bedford SB5s new in 1962 and modified by the bodybuilder to have front entrances. Working as a one-man bus, this one, 745 FEW, prepares to take on a healthy load in Drummer Street. This part of the bus station is nowadays used by express coaches.
A B Cross

serving Hinxton and RAF Duxford.

The Royal Air Force was now providing far less business for the local bus and coach operators. Weekend leave services from the bases were discontinued, while Premier's express service 8 to RAF Duxford ceased in 1966. 'Express' always looked incongruous on the blinds of elderly K5Gs, but it probably referred to the direct route taken rather than the speed reached. The journey on the indirect service 1 via Fowlmere took much longer. No-one who saw the airfield at Duxford in the 1960s could have imagined the present-day spectacle of several hundred buses and coaches converging on this desolate spot every September. In 1968 RAF Stradishall (now a prison) lost its bus service to Cambridge altogether, when the outer section of Premier's meandering route 44 was withdrawn.

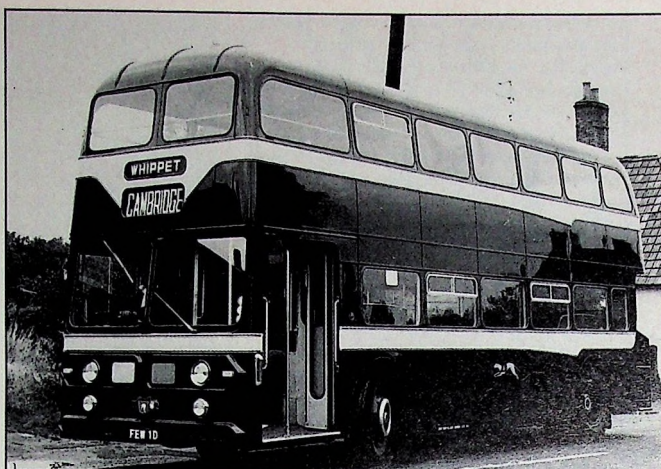
As the RAF closed its aerodromes, the aforementioned Doctor Beeching was depriving the area of many of its railways, although the first closure came before his infamous reshaping programme began. The single-track branch to Mildenhall passed through Burwell and in June 1962 was replaced between Isleham and Cambridge by B&D's service 11. Throughout East Anglia, buses of many operators replaced trains, although the new services often lasted only as long as the subsidies. Eastern Counties numbered rail-replacement routes in the 400-series.

Unpromising territory

Following the closure of the Cambridge-Haverhill-Sudbury line in March 1967, Haverhill buses on service 113 were renumbered 413 for a while on weekdays, although the Hadstock and Streetly End sections retained the old number. The Cambridge-Bedford section of the line to Oxford was replaced in January 1968 by service 428, a joint Eastern Counties/United Counties operation through unpromising territory. The two University cities were linked by a more successful coach service (39) operated jointly by Premier Travel and the two Percival's companies based at each end of the route. The coaches followed a better populated route via Luton and Aylesbury, and valuable intermediate traffic was built up.

Eastern Counties received three new coaches in April 1964 which combined extra length and rear engines. Numbered RE974-6 (AAH 124-6B) they were the company's first Bristol RELH6Gs, and were a regular sight on the Norwich-Cambridge-London service (E) for many years. After the delivery of the last MW coaches in 1964, the last FS Lodekkas in 1965 and the last MW buses in 1966, larger vehicles were favoured. One fine afternoon in 1966 I emerged from my school in Hills Road just as brand-new FLF445 (GVF 445D) swept past on service 143. A quick trip to Drummer Street found Peterborough's FLF443 waiting to leave on the 151, confirming that Eastern Counties really had discovered forward-entrance double-deckers at last! More soon appeared (with HPW-D registrations) but history repeated itself, for they rarely appeared on the city routes until the following year. From 1967, new FLFs had only a route number at the rear (the earlier examples were quickly modified), while the ONG-F batch of 1968 were brighter internally, with white panels replacing green. Rear destination displays gradually went out of use on older

The first of the FEW?
The acquaintance of the Lee and Delaine-Smith families led to the joint purchase of two pairs of Whyleland Atlanteans. Whippet's first new double-decker was this Willowbrook-bodied example, FEW 1D, delivered early in 1966 complete with Delaine-style decorations. It is seen at the operator's depot in Hilton.
Roy Marshall



London Transport received large numbers of new buses during the 1960s, displacing well-maintained secondhand bargains to many independent operators. Whippet purchased two RTs and three RLHs, which appeared on stage and school services, although the RLHs never received destination blinds. Seen here in Huntingdon, the former RLH48 (MXX 248) served Whippet until 1974. It has since been superbly preserved in London Transport green livery.
A B Cross



Premier Travel's Haverhill depot operated most of the journeys on services 44/45, serving many small villages to the east of Cambridge. This former Ribble 'White Lady', DCK 217, is seen in 1964 bound for RAF Stradishall, which lost its direct bus route to Cambridge four years later. This bus remained with the same driver (Roland Scrivener) throughout its 11-year career with Premier, and was always very well cared for.
G R Mills



double-deckers; as their bus approached its terminus passengers no longer heard the flurry of activity on the stairs when the conductor reset the blind.

Non-Bristol

By now the letter L (for Bristol) was no longer considered necessary in fleetnumber prefixes, although older types were not re-lettered.

Having made this decision, the company received some Bedford buses and coaches in 1967, its first non-Bristol vehicles for 12 years. The coaches, with Duple Viceroy bodies on VAM14 chassis, were represented locally by CB837 (LNG 837E). Another new type was the RS class of RELS6G buses, featuring the attractive but short-lived body style with curved windscreens, and Cambridge was

allocated RS649 and 657 (KVF 649/57E). In the meantime, I had discovered beer, my sisters had discovered miniskirts and Snoopy, and my family moved to a larger house in the village of Harston. Alas, the former Harston & District depot (where Premier Travel's operations began in 1936) had already closed, but our nearest bus stop was convenient for service 1 from Duxford Aerodrome. Premier also covered a few journeys (numbered 2) on the hourly Eastern Counties 108, operated mainly from the larger company's Royston outstation. Two crews (one early, one late) staffed the busier, double-deck journeys and an FLF became the regular allocation, working alongside OMO MWs. As flower power captivated the nation's youth, travelling to school by bus became part of my routine. Eastern Counties buses followed four different routes, all numbered 108, between Royston and Cambridge, and the bus I was supposed to catch each morning usually appeared first. Displaying 'RELIEF 108', it operated via Long Road and served two schools, including mine. For some reason I always missed it, although I regularly used it to travel home. I preferred to travel on the next departure (also displaying 'RELIEF 108'). This assisted the service bus (Royston's FLF, displaying 'CAMBRIDGE 108') and followed the normal route along Trumpington Road. This took some time, after which it was necessary to catch a crowded local 106. This routine provided a leisurely start to my A-level studies each day, as well as offering me the chance to see (and ride on) a wide selection of vehicles, for anything and everything could appear. On one Arctic morning, LKH249 (FNG 398), a rebodied (heaterless) wartime K5G came clattering through the freezing fog, to be greeted by groans from everyone at the bus stop. On another occasion, the solitary lowbridge KSW (LK301) escaped from its normal duties on the 101 to provide more variety. Single-deckers made heavy weather of the crowds on the 106. A rather fierce conductress made all 47 of us (no standing!) behave sensibly on an RELH coach one morning, while a crew-operated SC4LK carried far more than 35 passengers one afternoon, the conductor starting and stopping the bus by solemnly pulling the bell cord and not saying a word to anybody. Another notable journey, in May 1968, was on brand-new RL673 (PPW 673 F), one of the first REL6G buses, still with 'Body by Eastern Coach Works Ltd' stickers in the windows. These saloons were the first for several years not to be OMO-fitted, and remained crew-operated for about six months. The first LH6Ps also arrived, logically classified LH. These noisy vehicles seemed to be ideal replacements for the SC4LKs, and withdrawals of the latter soon began, starting with the coaches.

By this time it was clear that one of my favourite types of bus, the halfcab single-decker, was almost extinct in the Eastern Counties fleet. Double-deckers replaced the L5Gs on service 139 in 1966, and the last LWLs departed in 1968. I was delighted, therefore, with United Counties' decision that double-deckers were no longer necessary on service 175. New REL6Gs (also with two-person crews) now took turns with former Hants & Dorset Queen Mary coaches and, best of all, standard L-types.



Alas, this did not last long, and my daily observations of the local bus scene ended in October 1968. Much to my surprise I obtained some A-level passes and, despite the opportunities for further study in my home city, I set off for London University. I became a regular traveller on RTs, RMs, RMCs, RFs and Aldershot & District Lolines but I was not in Cambridge to see the arrival of LS buses from the Bristol and Red & White fleets, nor to share the pride of the Tilling operators when they became part of the National Bus Company. I missed the introduction of VRTs in 1969, although I rode on an early example on a visit home, working the 108 with a Royston crew, for the company did not convert these buses for OMO for several months either. I never did join the ranks of my heroes, the Eastern Counties conductors, some of whom continued to serve for many years afterwards. I did, however, become very skilled later on with an Insert Setright as one of Premier Travel's select band, but that is another story. **CB**

Paul Carter covered the Eastern Counties operations in Cambridge in CB23 and the other operators in the city at that time in CB31.

Top: Seen leaving Drummer Street, former private hire RF7 (LUC 207) was one of nine similar vehicles eventually owned by Premier Travel. These one-man 35-seaters replaced double-deckers on quieter journeys and could be seen throughout the company's large operating area. The RF is passing a rather different 35-seater of Eastern Counties, a Bristol SC4LK – neither bus providing many clues about its destination.
A B Cross

Above: Premier's express routes became increasingly important, prompting the purchase of two new 36ft AEC Reliances in 1964. They had Alexander bodywork, rare in the south, and a fleet of 20 was eventually built up. GER 501E, one of the 1967 pair was photographed on a wet day in Cambridge, bound for Clacton on service 5. The passengers are being assisted by driver Harold Lee, whose professionalism did so much to build up traffic on this route.
A Richardson/Photobus

Paul Carter first became aware of buses at the age of two. Some years later he spent two summer seasons with Blackpool Transport, before beginning a long association with Premier Travel as a conductor and driver. He now divides his time between teaching and driving for Fuggles of Benenden.